Community Physical Image and Character Element

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Community Physical Image and Character Element

Introduction

The Springfield-Greene County Community Physical Image and Character Element has been written in conjunction with other Elements of *Vision 20/20* including Land Use and Growth Management Element, the Parks, Greenways and Open Space Element, and the Transportation Element. The purpose of this Element is to guide City ordinances, capital improvements and site plan reviews to gradually improve the overall physical appearance of the built environment.

Focus Group Goals

The Community Physical Image and Character Plan is based on the goal formulated by the Community Quality and Design Focus Group and the consultant's observations in the Community Physical Image Analysis (published previously by the City of Springfield). Following are four primary goals from that Focus Group:

1.   Improve the visual appearance of the urban area.

Springfield should take steps to reduce visual blight caused by poor quality signs, utility placement, dominance of the automobile, and new development that is out of character with its surroundings.

2.   Ensure high quality development.

In order to become a more attractive and livable community, Springfield and Greene County should encourage good design and quality materials. Residential development should include attractive parks, street trees, and connections to other parts of the community. Special studies should be prepared for areas in transition or having a high visual profile.

3.   Maintain a small-town atmosphere while enhancing and developing character, livability, and pride in the community.

Springfield has historically been a distinct community in southwest Missouri. As growth continues, it will be important to preserve a sense of place by saving historic buildings, maintaining older neighborhoods and seeing that the center city prospers. It is equally necessary that new developments, which will often be quite different from older

developments, blend with and complement the existing city. Variety is important to the growth of the city and can be achieved in a way that benefits the entire community. The City and the County can lead by setting high standards of quality in their buildings and other public improvements.

4.   Increase the amount, attractiveness, and impact of open space and public spaces in urbanized areas.

Open space in developed areas softens the impact of the built environment and contributes to a more attractive community. Attractive public spaces invite people to relax or stop and talk. The community can use open space to enhance its physical image by preserving significant undeveloped areas and requiring minimum amounts of open space within individual developments. The community should expect some areas to remain open and undeveloped because of community investment, some because of the undevelopable nature of the land, and some because of requirements in existing or new ordinances.

Factors Affecting Contemporary Urban Character

A community's physical image is composed of both natural and man-made features. Distinct or unique features such as the elaborate designs or decorations of a landmark building, weeds growing in the cracks of a concrete median, or a discarded paper bag blown against a roadside shrub are all elements that play a part in defining community image.

Many of the elements that make up the community physical image have to be accepted as givens or beyond local public control. The natural features which make up the physical environment of Springfield, such as the general topography, rivers and streams, sinkholes, and existing vegetation, are elements which can not be easily changed and must be considered permanent. Also, many of the region's man-made structures and features are the result of forces beyond the local control and therefore need to be accepted or accommodated. Some of these larger forces include the following: dominance of the automobile, new technologies, and changing market trends.

Dominance of the Automobile

One of the greatest impacts on our lifestyles and on our urban environments has been the emergence of the ?automobile culture." The auto, while providing convenient and comfortable transportation, has also contributed to urban sprawl, air and water pollution, and the need for an extensive network of roads and parking facilities, which tend to be a primary component of our visual environment. How to accommodate the auto is, perhaps, the single most critical challenge in contemporary urban design.

New Technologies

New technologies are changing how we design our homes and communities. Communication technologies, such as television, the computer, video recorders, and the Internet, are changing many of our personal habits and patterns ranging from how we shop to how we interact and are entertained.   For instance, before the advent of movies, television, and videos people would more frequently sit on front porches and socialize with their neighbors. Conversely, the current trend is to rent a video and watch it in the home, or to go to a multi-screen movie complex. Regarding shopping, the trend has been away from small neighborhood retail centers to large, single-stop ?big box? retailers. In the future, more shopping may even be done via the Internet without leaving the house.

These trends are not absolute but they do show that our general living patterns are changing and these changes need to be continuously monitored in order to provide the appropriate responses in our physical environments.

Changing Market Trends

Market trends and patterns have a profound impact on the visual appearance and character of site layout and development, building massing, and architectural design. One example is the current trend away from multi-store downtowns and neighborhood retail nodes to large-scale, single-trip, ?big box?? stores with large parking lots. It is hard to predict how long this trend will continue, but it must be accepted as a general market force at present.

All of these major forces can be appropriately managed and controlled to minimize most of their negative environmental and visual impacts. The essential requirements are to recognize that these forces are a major factor in our lives and address them realistically and appropriately.

In addition to the large, society-wide forces, there are a number of local conditions that can contribute to a poorly-developed and frequently degraded community physical image. The absence of a clear community plan, lack of public land development controls, insufficient public funding for infrastructure, and acceptance of the most expedient solution are elements that compound the problem and which need to be considered in developing our physical environments.

The Community Physical Image Plan was prepared with the understanding that Springfield and Greene County want to improve and enhance their physical environment, even if the enhancements will require an extra effort in terms of capital cost and upkeep and maintenance expenditures. Common, day-to-day housekeeping items, such as the need to keep streets clean, prune and trim street trees, pick up litter and debris, and remove weeds and unsightly vegetation, are assumed to be basic requirements and therefore are not discussed in this section. However, their importance in presenting a good community image is critical and must be funded at appropriate levels.

Components of This Plan Element

The discussion is grouped under four major community form components:

1. Regional Setting
3 Corridors
3. Neighborhoods and Districts
4. Parks, Greenways and Parkways

One or more objectives are presented for each of these four components. Under each component, several subjects are discussed and one or more actions are presented. Photos are included as examples of comparable projects, features, or applications and are not meant to represent specific recommendations for Springfield.

Regional Setting

Understanding how Springfield relates physically to its surrounding region would help both residents and visitors to appreciate the landscape and feel rooted in a unique and special place.

Residents and visitors should be able to understand where Springfield is located in the overall physiographic region of the Ozarks and southern Missouri; have a mental map of their home relative to the major nearby streams and lakes; discern the general patterns of valleys, hills and sinkholes; and have a basic understanding of the geologic forces that produced the natural landscape.

Examples of physical features that make the region distinctive include the James River Valley, McDaniel and Fellows Lakes, the South Dry Sac River Valley, Pierson and Wilson's Creeks, the exposed bedrock, karst topography, the pattern of sinkholes, springs and losing streams, and the visual character of the rural areas.

Similarly, it is important to preserve and highlight special social, civic or cultural features. These may include Park Central Square, Jordan Creek, historic districts and structures, Valley Water Mill, Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Park, and the Nathan Boone homestead.

A general awareness of these and other features helps one feel part of a particular place, provides a sense of history, and promotes their preservation for future generations. In recent decades many distinctions among local places, environments and cultures have been diminished by urban development, franchise businesses, high-speed transportation and mass communications. The positive image of Springfield will be improved to the extent that it can save, accentuate and interpret those major features that make it special and different.

Objective 1: Use public improvements and land development regulations to preserve, highlight and communicate an understanding of the major elements of the regional environmental and cultural history of Springfield and Greene County.

Actions:

1. **James River:** Strive to maintain the natural character of the James River valley, particularly the floodplain and floodway, the steep slopes and the vistas across the valley. Use the land use plan and zoning ordinance to keep land open or in low-density use for reasons of public safety and appearances. Acquire land for public purposes such as parks and greenways. Give the public visual access to the river valley by building a parkway reasonably near the river bluffs and providing overlooks, either associated with the parkway or at other locations. Coordinate Springfield and Greene County efforts with those of Christian County.

The James River valley defines the southern edge of the Springfield urban area.

2.   **McDaniel and Fellows Lakes:** Improve public views and access to these lakes while protecting their function as drinking water reservoirs.

3.   **Creeks:** Implement the multi-jurisdictional plan for greenways along the major creeks in the Springfield vicinity, including the public acquisition of land. Acquire land for parks at locations along the creeks that include prime examples of the regional environment and/or particularly beautiful views of the creek valleys.

4.   **Exposed Bedrock, Sinkholes and Springs:** Seek opportunities to display bedrock, such as when cutting grades for road construction, or building features such as retaining walls, ground signs, entry monuments or park buildings. Exposing bedrock emphasizes one of the characteristics of Springfield -- its position atop the Ozarks plateau -- that makes it distinctive and special.

Preserve open space around sinkholes and springs for the protection of water supplies as well as to increase public awareness of these important elements of Springfield's natural environment.

High limestone bedrock is characteristic of the Springfield and Greene County geology.

5. **Wooded Areas:** Protect significant wooded areas through a regulatory program that restricts the number and quality of trees that may be removed for land development and which requires replacement of young trees. This program should be based on a professional assessment of the forest around Springfield and other cities in Greene County and should be assessed in conjunction with the park and greenway acquisition programs so that the regulatory and acquisition programs may complement one another.

6. **Community Entrances:** Build community entry and identification monuments at locations visible to people traveling to or through the Springfield vicinity. Recommended locations include:

    C   Along US 65 at Chestnut Expressway, Sunshine Street, Battlefield Road, I-44 and US 60
    C   Along I-44 at US 65 and Mulroy Road
    C   Kearney Street coming from the airport
    C   Campbell Street (US 160) coming out of the James River valley.

    Figure 19-1, Community Physical Image Improvements, illustrates recommended locations for community entrance monuments.

7. **Urban vs. Rural Distinction:** Work to retain a visual distinction between urban areas and rural areas throughout Greene County, but especially around Springfield. The *Vision 20/20* Land Use and Growth Management Element recommends compact urban development within the Urban Service Area and very low density, rural style development outside the Urban Service Area. Means of retaining a strong visual difference include the major elements of the *Vision 20/20* land use plan: very low housing densities in the rural areas and clustered rural housing.

8. **Historic Resources:** Preserve and interpret structures and districts with architectural and/or historic merit to help citizens understand and appreciate how Springfield and Greene County came to be what they are today. Follow the policies of the Historic Preservation Element.

Willard

Brookline

Battlefield

Republic

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

Kearney

Division

Chestnut

Expressway

Grand

Sunshine

Battlefield

Interstate 44

McDaniel Lake

Fellows Lake

Ritter Spring Park

US 65

US 160

US 160

US 60

James River Freeway

City of Springfield	Commercial Corridor Streetscape Improvements
Future Growth Area	Residential Corridor Streetscape Improvements
Existing Parks	Major Entry Feature
Open Space; Golf	City Boundary
Planned Greenways	
Planned Parkway	

Figure 19-1
Major Physical Image Improvements

1 Sq. Mile

Springfield-Greene County
VISION 20/20

Corridors

This section of the Community Physical Image and Character Element addresses:

C	General corridor issues
C	Highway corridors
C	Developed residential corridors
C	Commercial corridors

Each of these types of corridor s carries large volumes of traffic but each is in a different setting and, therefore, must respond to different conditions.

Parkways and greenways, which are also corridors, are addressed in the final section of this chapter, Parks, Greenways and Parkways.

Objective 2: Improve the appearance of the major roadway corridors in Springfield.

General Corridor Issues

These issues apply in varying degrees to each type of corridor.

City Gateway and Entry Monuments

One of the more dramatic enhancements to the physical environment of Springfield, especially for visitors, would be major city gateways or entry monuments. These features, located along some of the major highways such as US 65, US 160 or I-44, would welcome visitors, make a good first impression and define the approximate community edge.

Example of a Community Entrance Monument

In order for the gateways to be effective, they should be substantial in size and well-maintained. They could be simple structures with basic designs, such as stone walls with metal lettering, or they could be elaborate structures with neon or fiber-optic lettering or

graphics and elaborate materials. The design must be appropriate to Springfield, convey the proper theme or image, and be affordable to maintain.

Entry monuments should be sited in highly visible locations along major access routes, contain one simple message and be constructed of materials that reflect the character of the region. The bedrock limestone that protrudes in many locations would be a suitable material since it would complement its surroundings and convey the message that Springfield is atop the Ozark Plateau. Ideally, that material would also be used in private ground signs, retaining walls, screen walls and similar improvements, adding to the theme.

Actions:

1. **City Gateways:** Design and construct city gateways and entry monuments at key Springfield access points to welcome visitors, demarcate city boundaries and establish a theme or image for the City. Create methods of financial assistance or tax incentives for public or private landowners that are interested in improving entryways. Coordinate with state and federal highway departments to implement the City's entryway beautification plans (continue the effort begun with work on the James River Freeway).

2. **Design Guidelines:** Develop and distribute design guidelines for the City Gateways for private and public use.

City-Wide Pathfinder Sign System

A city-wide ?pathfinder system" would help visitors and residents find their way around the City and improve the community?s image. The system would consist of consistent and colorful informational signs that identify and give directions to the community?s many facilities and attractions. The pathfinder signs, which could be either internally lit or metal, and either freestanding or mounted on existing structures (such as light poles), could include a symbol of each facility, the name and a directional arrow. They also could include a city symbol or logo element to reinforce the community theme.

Starting points for the pathfinder sign system should include arterial roadways near interchanges with the major perimeter highways such as I-44, US 65 or the James River Freeway. Signs should be clustered along the arterial roads at periodic intervals, particularly before turning points. Placement should be more frequent in Greater Downtown and near SMSU, which may have a higher density of destinations and more visitors.

Example of a pathfinder sign system.

Actions:

1.   Pathfinder Sign System: Design and install a citywide pathfinder sign system to advertise and make more visible Springfield**?**s major facilities and attractions.

Off-Premise Advertising

Off-premise advertising signs, usually known as billboards, are a major community image issue. Many people consider billboards to be visually offensive, although some of them can be reasonably attractive. Nonetheless, billboards are a means of local businesses advertising and property owner income. The Missouri Department of Transportation has a program to install clusters of small signs near highway exits and intersections announcing businesses that serve travelers, which reduces the need for billboards.

Actions:

1.   Billboard Location and Spacing: Amend the regulation of off-premise signs to reduce the zoning districts in which they may be located, introduce minimum spacing requirements, prohibit roof-top billboards, and generally decrease their allowable number.

2.   Utility Lines

Overhead utility lines are one of the major visual impacts in some of Springfield's arterial road corridors, such as Sunshine Street and Glenstone Avenue. Tall, wooden poles and the large number and complex pattern of lines create a congested and unsightly visual environment. Also, the poles occupy valuable space in already-constricted rights-of-way, and in some cases are dangerously close to the traffic lanes.

There are many overhead utility wires along major roads in Springfield.

Ideally, all overhead utility lines should be relocated underground or, if that is not feasible, relocated to a less visible corridor. However, some overhead utilities, such as high-voltage lines, may be too expensive or impractical to locate underground. In that case, solutions should be explored to minimize the visual impact of the lines by designing special, less obtrusive utility poles and by combining as many of the lines in as few locations as possible.

Actions:

1.   Utility Relocation: The City and County, in conjunction with City Utilities, should develop a plan to minimize the visual impact of utility lines. This plan should establish policies and guidelines to relocate utility lines underground or to less visible corridors when engaging in streetscape improvements, road widening and/or area revitalization projects.

2.   Utility Lines in New Neighborhoods: Utility lines in new residential subdivisions should be either underground outside (on the house side of) the sidewalk or between poles along the rear lot line.

Corridor Lighting

Inconsistent corridor lighting detracts from the visual appearance of corridors and can be dangerous to drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians. Ideally, all major roadway corridors should be uniformly lighted throughout the length of each corridor. In addition, a standard, basic light fixture should be used in consistent application patterns to provide general lighting for roadways.

Example of attractive corridor lighting

Actions:

1.   Roadway Lighting: Continue to uniformly light all major roadway corridors throughout the length of each corridor. Continue to require that each development and roadway have uniform lighting levels.

Highway Corridors

This category refers to roadways, such as I-44, US 65, the James River Freeway and the southern half of the Kansas Expressway, which have very wide rights-of-way and no or limited access to adjoining properties. These corridors are designed for through trips and carry large volumes of traffic. Increasing variety and color, balancing the paving materials with natural features, and breaking sight lines can reduce monotony and improve the appearance of these corridors. Refer to Figure 19-1 for locations of corridors recommended for improved landscaping and other treatments.

Landscaping and Theme Treatments

Planting clusters of trees and shrubs can be a very cost-effective way to create feature areas and introduce variety into these corridors. Larger clusters of evergreens or groupings of deciduous trees with a base of evergreen shrubs will add color and changing vistas.

Example of landscaping clusters in a highway corridor.

Special theme treatments in the open roadway corridors could be developed at bridges, fences or screen walls. Bridge structures, bridge railings, and lighting on bridges all present opportunities for introducing special or unique design treatments. A uniform design treatment could be developed for all open roadway corridors, or special themes could be developed for each corridor.

Example of a unique treatment in a highway corridor.

Actions:

1.   **Landscaping:** Evaluate and identify opportunity areas along the roadway corridors where trees (especially) or shrubs could be introduced. Coordinate the efforts among the Missouri Department of Transportation, Greene County Highway Department and the Springfield Public Works Department to accomplish roadway landscaping.

2.   **Kansas and Chestnut Expressways:** Improve the edges of the Kansas and Chestnut Expressways to parkway standards.

3.   **Other Visual Improvements:** Develop prototypical design treatments for open roadway corridor bridge, fence, and screen wall treatments. As opportunities arise, when bridges are reconstructed or roadways rebuilt, introduce the special theme treatments.

4.   **Maintenance:** Each responsible agency should understand and accept that a high level of maintenance is part of any and all successful landscaping or public signage program.

Residential Corridors

This category refers to major roads that abut housing, such as portions of Sunshine Street, the northern half of Kansas Expressway and National Avenue. These corridors are different from the open roadway corridors in that they are much more densely developed and have an urban appearance.

Screening for Sensitive Adjoining Uses

In situations where housing abuts high volume roads (either facing or backing up to the road), landscaping can mitigate the effect of the traffic on the housing. Such screening could consist of earth berms or of attractive screen walls. Both berms and screen walls should be landscaped, and the screen walls should be designed to enhance the corridor and complement the adjoining residential developments.

Example of residential screening along a major road.

Actions:

1. **Public Improvements:** Include extra landscaping and berming along residential areas when installing public landscaping along major roads or when building new arterial roads.

2. **Private Improvements:** Require that new residential developments include plantings and berming along major roadways to screen housing from the effects of traffic.

3. **Roadway Widening:** When widening a roadway, consider removing all of the buildings on one side of the road to create more space for roadway landscaping, lighting and sidewalks as well as to provide space for a landscaped buffer for the remaining housing on both sides of the road. (Example: Grand Street.)

4.   **Maintenance:** Springfield and Greene County should allocate funding for regular maintenance of landscaping in public rights-of-way so that these amenities remain attractive. In certain highly visible locations, an irrigation system should be installed to help ensure healthy plantings. (This is especially beneficial in commercial areas where there may be more heat and less groundwater.)

Landscaping Enhancements

A prime opportunity to enhance and **?**green up**?** Springfield would be to provide dense and continuous landscaping treatments in the residential road corridors. Since there is no need to maintain views of businesses as there is in commercial corridors and since the landscaping could help to mitigate some of the negative visual impacts, extensive use of shrubbery and/or closely spaced overstory street trees could be used to enhance these corridors and the city.

Example of a well-landscaped residential corridor

Actions:

1.   **Landscaping Plan:** Inventory the general pattern of trees along public streets in Springfield**?**s residential neighborhoods (such as portions of Nichols, Grant, National or Republic) and prepare a public residential street landscaping plan for urban development in Springfield and Greene County. That plan should include guidelines for species, spacing, placement, responsibilities and maintenance.

As opportunities arise, particularly revitalization projects or road widenings, improve the landscaping along residential streets. The City may also add trees independent of other roadway improvements.

2. **New Development:** Springfield and Greene County should require that trees be planted between the curb and the sidewalk of every street in each new residential subdivision. The placement of underground utilities and the width of the public street right-of-way should be adjusted to accommodate these trees. Trees should be selected and spaced according to the citywide landscaping plan mentioned above.

Commercial Corridors

Major commercial roadways, such as Glenstone, Kearney and Campbell south of Sunshine constitute the third type of activity corridor. The corridors present the greatest challenge in terms of community image since they are very intensely developed and contain some of the least attractive visual environments in the City. Major image issues are: constrained rights-of-way conditions, large expanses of pavement, overhead utility lines, the proliferation of public and private signs and billboards, and lack of landscaping treatments and streetscape amenities.

Some of the issues, such as removing overhead utility lines, uniformity of corridor lighting and consistent architectural theme treatments, are discussed elsewhere in this chapter. Following are some of the additional essential features that could help dramatically improve the image and appearance of the commercial corridors.

Landscaping and Theme Treatments

Springfield has a significant number of commercial corridors, and they tend to lack landscaping, generating very harmful effects on the appearance of the community. Increasing the number of trees along its commercial corridors would be the single most effective and beneficial action the community could take to improve its appearance.

Action:

1. **Access Points:** Springfield will add many more trees to the edges of commercially oriented roads such as Glenstone, Campbell and Kearney.

Access Points

Multiple direct access points in the commercial corridors create a sense of clutter, require more pavement, reduce the opportunities for landscaping and create traffic hazards. Although in many instances it may not be feasible to totally remove some of the access points, opportunities may exist to reduce multiple access points to a single property or to combine access to two adjoining properties into one common access point.

The Land Use and Growth Management Element of *Vision 20/20* includes background discussion and policies on this subject under the section heading Transitional Roadway Corridors.

Actions:

1.   Access Points: During site plan review, limit the number of access points allowed along commercial road corridors, and consolidate existing access points wherever possible. Identify prototypical options for removing or consolidating access points. Require that access points be limited in all new commercial developments within commercial roadway corridors.

Commercial Site Landscaping

One of the more noticeable negative features in the commercial corridors is the lack of screening for large parking lots. The lack of screening or landscaping along the edges of the roadways results in a continuous, uninterrupted expanse of pavement between building lines on opposite sides of the road. A low landscaped screen, up to three feet tall, along the right-of-way line or at the edge of parking lots would dramatically improve the visual character of the corridors by adding greenery to the streetscapes and by breaking up the large expanses of pavement.

Screened parking lot edge.

In addition to lacking screening for parking lots, most of the commercial developments along the major roadway corridors also lack general site and parking lot landscaping. The essential benefit of additional landscaping, in addition to providing edge treatments discussed previously, would be to break up large parking lots and to enhance pedestrian walkways.

Actions:

1. **Commercial Site Landscaping:** Springfield should continue to vigorously enforce its zoning requirements for commercial site landscaping, especially as they pertain to the street edge.

2. **Landscaping Regulations:** Springfield should review its recently-adopted zoning regulations pertaining to landscaping (Design and Development Standards, Sections 6-1000 through 6-1500) for possible improvement.

Greene County should prepare and adopt landscaping and screening regulations for use in its C-1, C-2, O-1, O-2 and M-1 zoning districts that are compatible with those of Springfield.

Special Theme Treatments

In order to enhance their identity and to provide visual variety, special theme treatments could be developed for portions of several major commercial roadway corridors. These designs could consist of unique landscaping treatments, distinctive light fixtures or custom banners or signs. Examples of streets where such public investments would be appropriate include Glenstone or Campbell Avenues and Battlefield, Kearney, Commercial, St. Louis or Walnut Streets.

Example of a special theme treatments for a commercial corridor.

Actions:

1. **Roadway Theme Treatments:** Identify roadway corridors for special theme treatments in conjunction with the various business communities and organizations. Prepare a special theme treatment design for each along with an implementation program.

Sign Systems

Most of the commercial corridors contain a wild profusion of commercial and public signs juxtaposed in various combinations. So many signs "shouting" so many messages results in visual pollution and message overload – a loss in the effectiveness of each sign. The Springfield sign ordinance was adopted in 1985 and generally allows overly large structures (e.g., 350 square feet for 125 feet of frontage along an arterial road).

The sign system in the commercial corridors needs to be simplified, coordinated, and scaled back. Regulations should be revised to limit the messages on each sign, restrict the number and size of signs permitted, and combine multiple signs into fewer coordinated sign panels.

Uncoordinated sign system.   *Coordinated sign system*

Actions:

1. **Sign Regulations:** Springfield and Greene County should comprehensively revise their sign ordinances in light of community visual quality goals stated in this plan with the intent of reducing the allowable sign area, height, number and visual clutter. The two ordinances should also be compatible with one another when completed.

Neighborhoods and Districts

This section addresses the major physical design elements of sub-areas of Springfield and the urbanizing portion of Greene County: neighborhoods (which are predominantly but not exclusively residential) and districts (which are defined here as predominantly non-residential). They are addressed jointly in this section because most of their design elements overlap.

Neighborhoods

A neighborhood is a portion of the city primarily oriented to housing although it also may contain compatible commercial development.

The residential neighborhood should be one of the basic building blocks of a city. Residents? feelings of orientation, belonging, supervision and security can be enhanced by designing areas that are perceived as self-contained, identifiable and differentiated from adjacent areas. In locations highly identified as neighborhoods, crimes such as vandalism, burglary or assault tend to be lower and participation in civic organizations such as block clubs tends to be higher. However, research has shown that residents have varying perceptions of the boundaries of their neighborhood and feel differing degrees of neighborhood attachment and identification.

Achieving a sense of neighborhood is dependent upon several factors: presence of physical boundaries or edges, degree of similarity in housing type, internal circulation provided by the street pattern, presence of a shared or central physical element such as a park or school, and similarity of personal identifiers. However, strong neighborhood identity and attachment can be achieved in locations with mixtures of land use and demographics if other elements are present, such as perceived physical boundaries or a shared physical element. Creating and utilizing a name and symbol also builds neighborhood identity.

Thus, the community benefits to the extent that it can use physical planning and design to enhance residents? perception of neighborhood identity.

For the purposes of identifying and defining the desirable community physical character for Springfield, the members of the Community Quality and Design Focus Group made the following assumptions regarding residential neighborhoods. Residential neighborhoods should:

- Foster a sense of community and interaction among neighbors
- Promote pedestrian and bicyclist use
- Provide a sense of identity and belonging
- Create a sense of comfort and security.

Although various neighborhood models and configurations have been tried and tested in the past, some basic components or requirements have proven to be the most helpful in creating successful and livable residential neighborhoods. They are described on the following pages. The reader should also refer to sections of the Land Use and Growth Management Element and the Neighborhoods Element of *Vision 20/20* for additional discussion on this subject.

Districts

A district is defined here as being primarily but not exclusively non-residential and having a dominant theme. A district could be a mixed area such as Greater Downtown, several shopping malls, a large industrial park, a college campus, a hospital-clinic complex or the governmental buildings along Central Street. The Activity Centers identified in the *Vision 20/20* Land Use Element could each be considered districts.

Some districts are prominent, such as Southwest Missouri State University and its environs, while others, especially the more isolated industrial parks, are more remote and less visible. Although none are unimportant, greater attention should be paid to the more highly visible districts, since they have a greater visual impact.

Districts serve as reference points and contribute to the character and image of the community. Ideally, each should be highlighted and given its own identity and image. Clearly defining and identifying each district could strengthen residents**?** mental image of the city and lend color and interest to the urban environment.

This section of the chapter addresses:

C   Identity

C   Streets and sidewalks

C   Landscaping

C   Architectural themes

C   Site Plan Review

The *Vision 20/20* Land Use and Growth Management Element has an extensive section on residential neighborhood design, which the reader can reference. In addition, the Transportation Element addresses traffic calming.

Objective 3: Build residential neighborhoods that foster a sense of community and interaction among neighbors, provide a sense of identity and belonging, and create a sense of comfort and security.

Objective 4: Accentuate the impression that Springfield is composed of several districts and neighborhoods to build pride and identity.

Neighborhood or District Identity

Names, Signs and Symbols

A neighborhood or distinct name can be a strong image-maker and, combined with a well-designed graphic logo or symbol, could be used to enhance the identity and character of a district and announce its edges and entries. The name and graphic symbol should be used for all district advertisement, promotions and special activities.

Institutional districts, in most cases, assume the name of the institution -- SMSU, Cox Medical Center, and Drury College. Commercial districts are frequently named after their location or they are given a new name -- Commercial Street District, Bass Pro Shop, Battlefield Mall. In other cases, however, the name can be relatively vague or ambiguous --

?Walnut Street**?** could refer to the Walnut Street commercial area or to the Walnut Street Historic District and **?**Park Central**?** could refer to the immediate area around Park Central or to the whole downtown commercial core.

Neighborhood or district identity can be promoted through simple signs mounted on posts or utility poles; it could include a landscaped monument sign; or it could include public art or other special features.   For example, Springfield has been identifying its historic districts (Midtown, Walnut Street and Commercial Street) with signage.

Example of a neighborhood entrance sign.

Actions:

1.   Identification: Springfield and Greene County should name and map each current or future neighborhood or district as a basis of design improvements and pride.

The City and County should create for each major district a unique logotype or symbol. Involve institutional and commercial owners in establishing district names and symbols. These recommendations are most appropriate for neighborhoods or districts in which the City is making investing in redevelopment and infrastructure improvements in conjunction with private property investments (e.g., Greater Downtown or Commercial Street).

Springfield and Greene County should design and install neighborhood or district identification signs or entry monuments at major entries.   This program should be undertaken with a few neighborhoods at a time.

Boundaries, Edges and Entries

People have a much easier time identifying with and feeling pride in a neighborhood or district if they have a clear idea of its boundaries. Often neighborhoods are defined by natural or man-made features, such as rivers, ravines, railroads, highways, or major roadway corridors. However, physical boundaries are often supplemented by similarities in housing types, sizes or values. Frequently, neighborhoods will be structured around and will be named after a neighborhood school or park. Neighborhoods can come in many sizes and shapes, but one square mile is a typical and manageable size.

Weakly defined edges can obscure the identity of a neighborhood or district and negatively affect surrounding development, especially where the adjoining land uses are residential. Well-defined edges make it easier to perceive a neighborhood or district, minimize the likelihood of gerrymandered expansion and facilitate creation of entry features. The demarcation of edges can include walls, fences, berms, rows of trees and/or special, entry treatments.

Neighborhood or district edges should be simple and direct and should follow logical boundaries. For example, boundaries between single-family housing and dissimilar land uses are best established along alley or back yard lines rather than across a street since the back yard relationship minimizes potential negative impacts.
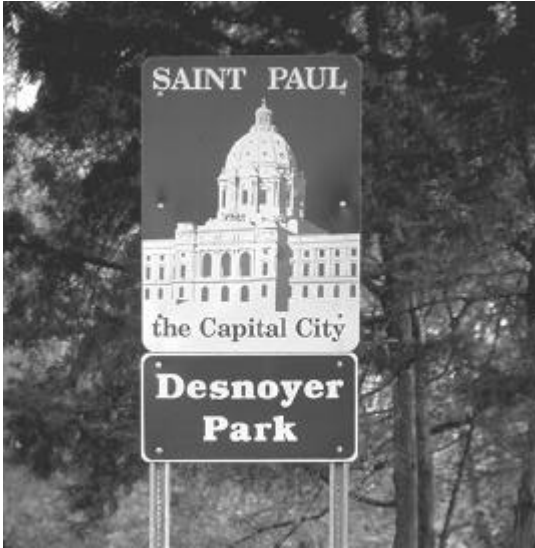
Example of a district gateway treatment.

Actions:

1.   Edges: Clearly demarcate the edge of each neighborhood or district and, as opportunities arise, correct inconsistent edge conditions. As districts grow and expand, adjust district edges in a logical and consistent manner to maintain a clearly defined edge.

2.   Entry Features: Incorporate special landscaped entry or gateway features at all key access points to each major neighborhood or district, particularly in areas of publicly-assisted revitalization.

Focal Area or Feature

Just as each neighborhood or district should have an identifiable edge, so should it also have a perceived center. Focal elements such as a neighborhood-oriented playground, an elementary school, a plaza, a clock tower, intersection landscaping or public art provide orientation, identity, beauty and interest. Rather than being an afterthought, the focal element should be integral to the overall district plan so that private buildings and outdoor spaces may complement it.

Focal elements may be created privately or as public infrastructure. Other private neighborhood focal elements could include small shops catering to the frequent needs of a small market area, such as a coffee shop, bakery, hardware store, pharmacy or restaurant. Businesses are most successful as neighborhood unifiers if they draw predominantly from the near vicinity, provide outdoor spaces for people-watching and socializing, particularly outdoors along the street, and are designed for easy access by foot or bicycle.

Examples of a neighborhood focal feature.

Actions:

1.   **Focal Features:** Evaluate all existing neighborhoods or districts for the existence of, or the potential to create, focal areas or features, and require that all emerging districts work toward creating these elements. Use focal features as an important element in any publicly supported revitalization plan. Suggest the creation of such features during site plan reviews to improve property values, and negotiate development bonuses or variances in exchange.

Variety and Compatibility

Variety with compatibility is another feature of successful neighborhoods. This means that the housing in a neighborhood should not be all the same type, style, size, and value, but rather that there be a reasonable mix of various types of housing which can accommodate various lifestyles, incomes, and social groups. Integrating small clusters of duplexes, townhouses, and small apartment complexes into single-family residential areas can create more interesting and vibrant neighborhood environments and can reduce the need to provide separate, high-density residential enclaves.
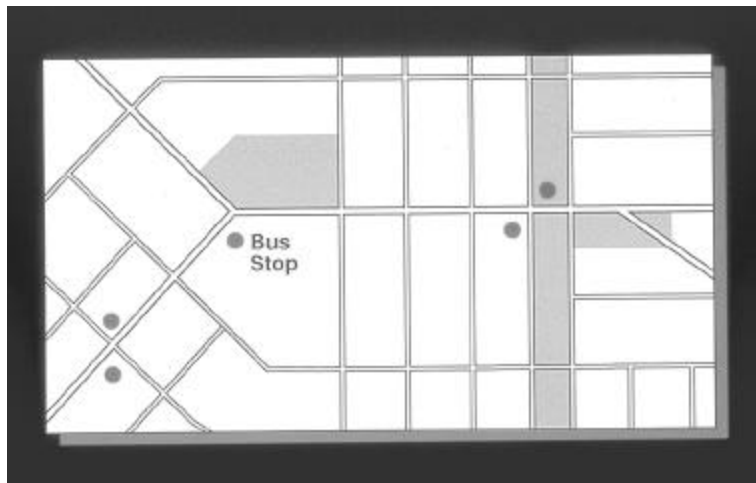
Actions:

1.   **Internal Compatibility and Variety:** Promote neighborhood internal
      compatibility in terms of composition, image, and appearance through land use
      planning and zoning. Those controls should guide developers to produce independent
      projects that are similar in nature, scale and density while allowing variations (e.g.,
      higher density housing) appropriately located and buffered.

Neighborhood Street and Sidewalk Patterns

Street Network

The two extremes in traffic circulation patterns for residential neighborhoods are the historic
grid pattern and the contemporary, limited-access residential subdivision (see diagram). The
grid pattern allows unlimited choices and options for travel through neighborhoods and
distributes traffic evenly in multiple directions, thus helping to reduce congestion on the
collector and arterial roadway network. The limited-access subdivision limits the number of
entry and exit points to a neighborhood and concentrates all traffic in a few locations. Thus,
some streets have very little traffic and others great amounts.

Although the choice of roadway network is more of a planning issue, it does have an impact
on the visual image and character of neighborhoods and the city. The grid pattern has a
more open and inviting appearance and facilitates more interaction among neighborhoods.
The limited-access subdivision projects an image of separation and exclusivity and can
respond better to the natural terrain. The choice of street pattern is primarily an issue for
new residential areas since the older parts of Springfield already have been developed
predominantly in a grid pattern.

Diagram of interconnected street pattern
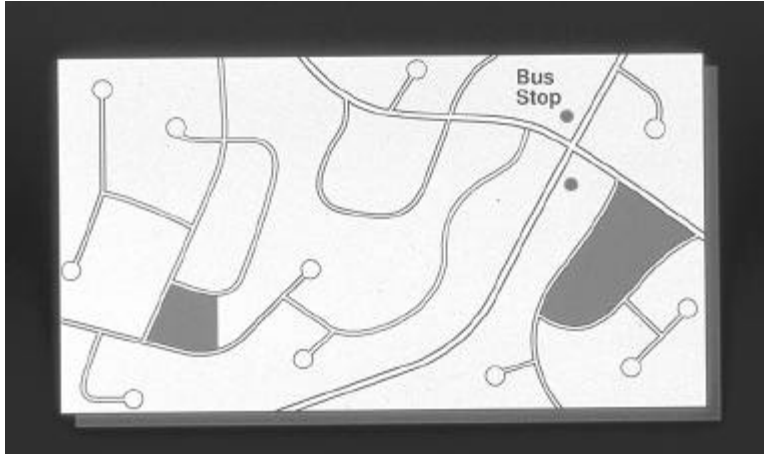
Diagram of discontinuous street pattern.

Actions:

1.   Neighborhood Street System Design: Design all residential developments to include multiple access and egress points (where practical) and provide several travel routes through the neighborhood. Require all new residential subdivisions to provide public street movement to each cardinal direction unless impractical because of existing development constraints or environmental conditions.

Residential Street Design

The design of residential streets and the relationship between the street and the house are the basic design elements of Springfield and Greene County. These are the spaces most often observed by residents and the spaces that most influence the appearance of residential neighborhoods.

The local residential street should do more than simply move auto traffic efficiently. It should:

• Induce auto traffic to move at a pace appropriate to the land access function of the street

• Provide a sidewalk on which people can walk, small children can play and bicycle, and people can socialize with their neighbors

• Shade the yards and houses

• Provide a reasonably safe and convenient place for adolescents and adults to bicycle

• Add beauty to the neighborhood

• Accommodate public and private utility lines.

Action:

1. **Local Residential Street Design:** Springfield and Greene County should amend their subdivision regulations to require that new local/minor residential streets be designed with sidewalks and street trees similar to the following sketch.   The City and the County should create compatible requirements so that the community can grow with a consistent appearance.
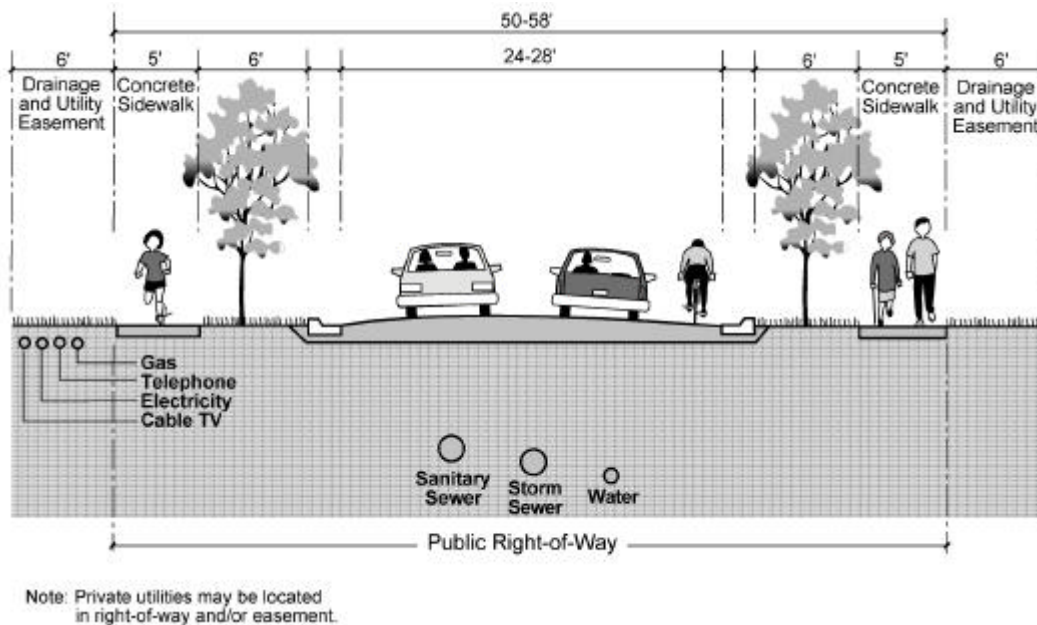
Proposed cross section of street right-of-way, pavement, boulevard, and sidewalk.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are an essential element for circulation and provide opportunities for socializing, playing and exploring a neighborhood on foot.

Sidewalks should be a minimum of 5 feet wide rather than the current 4-foot requirements since two adults cannot walk comfortably side by side on a 4-foot sidewalk. A width of at least 6 feet is recommended for the boulevard (the area between the curb and the sidewalk) so that tree roots do not affect the sidewalk, although 10 feet is desirable.

Example of a recommended sidewalk and boulevard

Actions:

1. **Sidewalks:** Provide sidewalks with a minimum width of 5 feet along both sides of residential streets. Separate sidewalks from the street by a minimum 6-foot wide strip of grass and trees. Where residential lots are commonly wider than 100 feet or other circumstances dictate it, a sidewalk need be provided on only one side of the street. Gaps in the sidewalk system should be filled.

Street Trees

Trees, regularly spaced along the street, are an essential ingredient for giving streets a residential character and making them feel more comfortable. Street trees add greenery, provide shade, give a street that ?lived in? feeling and contribute to neighborhood character. Selecting a variety of street trees for different streets or a specific palette of street trees for each neighborhood, could help reinforce the neighborhood identity and minimize street tree losses, in case of a disease epidemic or other environmental impacts.

Example of a desirable street tree treatment

Actions:

1. **Street Tree Infilling Program:** In neighborhoods that have a general pattern of public street trees but also have gaps in that pattern, Springfield should undertake a long-term program of adding trees. That planting should be conducted according to a plan that specifies the species for each street.

2. **New Developments:** Springfield and Greene County should require all new residential, commercial and industrial developments to include street trees according to a City and County street tree planting plan.

3. **Pattern of Street Tree Planting:** Tree species should not be randomly mixed although that would be the safest approach for preventing tree disease epidemics. Rather, the same species should be used for several blocks in sequence (such as from one collector street to the next) in order to establish a definite image for each street.

4. **Public Improvements:** Include supplemental street tree planting in the City**?**s capital improvements program and annual budget for the City and the County.

Street Lighting

Residential street lights add character and contribute to a safer environment in residential neighborhoods. The keys to successful residential street lighting programs are to make sure that the street lights have a **?**residential character**?** and that sufficient lighting is provided.

There are a couple of basic alternatives for street lighting in residential areas. One would be to install tall fixtures (25- to 30-foot mounting height) at street intersections. Another would be to install pedestrian-scaled (12- to 16-foot mounting height), ornamental (lantern or other special design theme) fixtures at 60 to 100 foot intervals. The second approach, although more expensive, would be a more **?**pedestrian friendly**?** and effective way to contribute to the character and image of residential neighborhoods.

Example of an attractive residential street light

Ideally, a different light fixture would be selected for each neighborhood. However, this might be impractical and expensive, since the City would have to stock and maintain a large number of different fixtures. A more practical approach would be to select one basic, sturdy light fixture as the residential standard for the whole City. It would be preferable to select a fixture that can be supplied by several manufacturers to ensure a steady supply and competitive prices.

One method for providing some variety and emphasis would be to establish a hierarchy of streets and to vary the spacing and the configuration (single, twin, or quad heads) of the light fixtures according to the significance of each street.

Actions:

1. **Lighting Program:** Springfield and Greene County should investigate developing an alternative street lighting program for existing and future residential neighborhoods. This program could (1) establish lighting standards (application, spacing, configuration) for various residential street categories, (2) select up to three alternative pedestrian-scaled fixtures and (3) identify the responsible agency and the funding source(s) for installing and maintaining the pedestrian-scaled street lights.

Neighborhood or District Landscaping

Residential Neighborhoods

A characteristic of well-developed and pleasant residential neighborhoods is abundant and varied landscaping. Landscaping enriches the visual environment and can soften harsh urban settings. Older residential neighborhoods tend to have more greenery, of course, because their trees and shrubs have matured. However, newer subdivisions areas lack sufficient plantings, or concentrate the landscaping in a few privately-used areas such as rear yards.

Since the character and requirements for each residential development will vary, it is difficult to recommend standard treatments for all applications. However, in addition to the minimum requirements specified in the zoning ordinance, developers should be encouraged to incorporate landscaping treatments in a variety of ways including:

C   Private trees in addition to the public street trees
C   Foundation planting around buildings
C   Special landscaping along walks and steps
C   Small entry features for each residential unit or complex
C   Hedges or landscaped borders to define the boundaries of each property.

The landscaping treatments should be varied from property to property and unit to unit in order to create maximum interest and character.

Example of desirable residential landscaping

Commercial Districts

Landscaping is a highly visible and effective enhancement for any district, however it must be designed to be practical, easily maintained and (in commercial districts) supportive of business objectives. Elements may include overstory trees, planters, building foundation planting, planting around entries and gateways, hedges and screens, ornamental trees or masses of flowers. Landscaping should define district edges and soften large expanses of pavement.

Outdoor service and storage areas

particularly need to be screened with plantings, especially where topography allows views from surrounding districts and streets. Appropriate screening should be created for each particular case and circumstance.

Example of a well-landscaped commercial district

Actions:

1. **Private Landscaping:** Encourage in all residential developments an abundant amount and variety of landscaping treatments -- especially in the front yards of properties. Work with the developers to identify opportunities for introducing landscaping variety and character into their projects.

2. **Preservation:** Preserve significant stands of trees and other major natural features during land development to the maximum extent possible.

3. **Recognition:** Devise public recognition programs to encourage and promote residential landscaping.

4. **Site Development:** Require sufficient landscaping in each district to break up large expanses of building massing and pavement areas and to leave the impression that about 20 percent of the area is green. Screen all outdoor service and storage areas from key primary views. Continue to administer the landscaping and screening requirements of the City and County zoning ordinances.

5. **Public Improvements:** Improve landscaping throughout the city by planting trees, shrubs and flowers in the right-of-way of selected streets, by landscaping each park,

and by requiring landscaping in residential, commercial and industrial developments.

6.   Park Landscaping: Springfield should prepare a landscaping plan for each of its parks.

District Architectural Themes

Architectural themes and building design standards and requirements are very complex and difficult topics, and great care should be taken in defining them. Requirements and recommendations which are too stringent or specific can lead to an environment which is overly rigid and possibly undesirable. On the other hand, if no guidelines are provided the result can be clutter and chaos. The ideal is to set a general framework yet allow flexibility and innovation to occur.

Springfield and Greene County do not review development applications for architectural appearance themes, only for setbacks and similar site planning criteria. Furthermore, neither unit of government feels that it should normally become involved in such review. However, there are a few instances when architectural review is appropriate, such as new buildings or major renovations in the Landmarks Zoning District, in Greater Downtown, and occasionally in Urban Conservation Zoning Districts.

When conducting architectural review, the aim is to achieve a certain degree of consistency within the district without strangling creativity or design evolution. New buildings should relate well to one another and acknowledge nearby architectural precedents. Exceptions to the prevailing themes and treatments should be well conceived and justifiable. Important elements of architectural theme include prevailing building setbacks, building heights, fenestration patterns, detailing, building materials and colors.

Example of an applied district architectural theme

Actions:

1. **Landmarks Districts:** Springfield should continue to review architectural design in the Landmarks Zoning Districts.

2. **Revitalization Areas:** Springfield should establish architectural theme guidelines for selected Urban Conservation Zoning Districts and for any major publicly-assisted redevelopment project. The City will also initiate reviews in Greater Downtown and the Government Plaza sub-districts of Center City, as recommended by the *Center City Revitalization Framework,* 1998.

3. **Small Town "Main Street" Areas:** Several of the cities in Greene County have a stock of handsome older commercial buildings set close to the street. New and infill development should strive to be compatible with this older pattern in terms of setback, height, materials, windows and doors.

4. **Reinforcing Established Themes:** In Landmarks Districts, Urban Conservation Zoning Districts, small-town "Main Street" commercial districts and any publicly-assisted redevelopment, renovations, new construction and, especially, any public building should reinforce the positive features of established district architectural themes.

Site Plan Review

In Springfield, reviews of applications for commercial, industrial or multiple-family housing site plans are presently performed by the Department of Development Services. The City staff has the authority to approve site plans, signs and cluster developments. Their reviews focus on conformance with the zoning ordinance for items such as building setbacks or number of parking spaces. Timely response and customer service is emphasized.

Members of other City departments, including the Planning and Development Department, are usually asked to comment on site plan applications but only to determine whether the site plan complies with City codes and ordinances. Consequently, the City does not attempt to guide the applicant in improving his or her site plan if it complies with the zoning ordinance.

The Springfield Planning and Zoning Commission and the Springfield City Council are involved in land development decisions only for rezonings and Conditional Use Permits. The Board of Adjustments reviews variances.

In Greene County, zoning administration functions much the same way as it does in Springfield, with straightforward staff reviews being considered by the Planning Commission.

In many instances, the appearance of Springfield and Greene County would be improved and new development made more compatible with its neighbors if the City**?**s or the County's professional planners and designers took a stronger guiding role in some or all of these reviews. There often are ways to improve a site plan that meets the minimum standards, often to the benefit of the applicant.

Actions:

1. **Discretionary Reviews:** Springfield and Greene County should amend their zoning ordinances and administrative procedures to encourage applicants to improve their commercial, industrial and/or multiple-family residential site plans even though the original submittal may already comply with City or County codes and ordinances. Threshold standards should be established for such reviews, exempting smaller projects.

Parks, Greenways and Parkways

The parks, greenways and parkways systems are essential elements of community image. Parks and open spaces, because they are green and offer recreational opportunities, already are a positive visual feature. However, there are additional treatments and enhancements which can further improve the appearance and image of parks and open spaces and, thus, of the community. Greenways and parkways are highly visible green spaces that link the parks and contribute greatly to one?s mental image of the city.

Objective 5: Build an integrated system of parks, open space, greenways and parkways that will deliver significant aesthetic and functional benefits to the entire Springfield community.

Park Definition and Identification

As with any public space, clear definition and identification is critical to a successful parks and open space system. People, in general, want to understand where the boundaries of spaces are and like to feel welcome in public facilities. Well-defined boundaries also communicate a sense of clarity and order.

The definition of boundaries can be accomplished in a number of ways. Boundaries can be established by fences, markers, landscaped borders, or simply by a row of trees. All of these techniques should be considered for the Springfield area park and open space system, depending on specific conditions and needs of each park.

A second component for defining and identifying parks and open spaces are entry gateways or monuments. A well-designed entry feature can set a positive tone for the park experience and make a visitor welcome. Park and open space entry features should have a solid, permanent appearance and should fit well with the surrounding environment. For easier identification, all the park entry features should have a common theme or element that clearly identifies and relates each park to the whole park and open space system.

Example of park entry monument

Actions:

1.   **Park Boundaries and Gateways:** Springfield should evaluate and select appropriate methods for defining park and open space boundaries and develop prototypical designs for park gateway and entry monuments. The City should program a series of park improvements designed to reinforce weak park boundaries, and install gateway and entry monuments. Similar design treatments should be applied to new parks.

Park Sign and Lighting Systems

In addition to the gateway and entry monuments, a uniform special sign system for parks and open space can help to define the parks and lend continuity to the parks and open space system. Just like the gateways and entry monuments, the special sign system should be well-designed and sturdy and should help people orient themselves and better understand the park and open space system. The sign system could also include special kiosks or information tablets to provide additional interpretative information.

Example of a park system interpretive sign

A distinct and unique park and open space light fixture can be used to further help define and identify the park facilities. Preferably, the special park theme light should be different from the rest of the city light fixtures and should fit the park and open space character.

Actions:

1.   **Park Signs and Lights:** Develop prototypical designs for park signs, kiosks, and interpretive features, and adopt a capital improvements program for implementing them. Select and use a special theme light fixture for the park and open space system.

Parkway and Greenway Systems

The parkway and greenway systems are two significant and exciting ideas to emerge from the *Vision 20/20* process. Although they are different in form and function, they are similar in that they will be linear, public systems for circulation, recreation and beauty.

The parkways will consist of roads with generous landscaping and, in most cases, bicycle and pedestrian paths and/or on-street bicycle lanes that cross and loop around Springfield. Most of the parkway system will be built in new alignments on the growing fringe of the community, although the Kansas and Chestnut Expressways should be retrofitted to bring them up to parkway landscaping standards. The perimeter parkways are expected to be collector or minor arterial roadways ranging in width from two to four lanes and with speed limits of no more than 40 miles per hour.

The parkway system and the greenway systems are illustrated by Figure 19-1 of this Element as well as in the Growth Management and Land Use Plan and in the Parks, Greenways and Open Space Plan.

The greenway system will include over 130 miles of linear public open space along creeks and rivers that is proposed to be acquired and improved during the coming decades. Included will be pedestrian and bicyclist paths although, unlike the parkways, there will be no motorized routes. Both the parkways and greenways have tremendous potential to positively affect the image of Springfield and Greene County. They will create major green corridors across the city, link neighborhoods and parks, provide gateways to community districts, guide residential development, raise and sustain property values and shape residents? mental maps of their community. Because of this potential, Springfield and Greene County should work proactively and with commitment on these investments since they will require several decades to accomplish.

To implement the parkway and greenway systems, coordination will be required between Springfield and Greene County, since many of the alignments are still outside the City; between Springfield and the Missouri Department of Transportation, since the two Expressways are State Highways; and among the *Vision 20/20* Land Use, Transportation and Parks plan elements.

Actions:

1. **Parkway System Design:** The Springfield Parkway and Greenway Systems should be designed to the highest quality in landscaping, signage, lighting, linear public open space and pedestrian-bicyclist transportation. The parkways should connect parks, greenways and major civic districts (such as Downtown or Government Plaza) to the extent possible. The relationship between each parkway and nearby existing or future land development should always be a primary concern.

    A balance should be struck on the parkways between the need to move autos and the desire to provide non-motorized circulation and recreation. Designers of future local and collector streets intersecting the parkways should be encouraged to extend the parkway treatments into and across adjacent neighborhoods in order to extend their

amenity value and further leverage the public investment. The River Bluff Parkway Plan should be used to establish conceptual design features and relationships that can them be used and refined for other segments of the system.

2. **Greenway System Design:** The Greenway System should incorporate the principles of riparian protection, flood control, environmental education, recreation and pedestrian and bicyclist circulation. Sufficient open space should be included so that the greenways are a true asset to adjacent housing.

3. **Jurisdictional Coordination:** Springfield and Greene County should cooperate on the design and alignment of the perimeter parkway system, since many of the alignments are still outside the City. Springfield should seek permission and financial support from the Missouri Department of Transportation for landscaping the Chestnut and Kansas Expressways. The Springfield Area Transportation Study Organization should act as the coordinating entity.

Implementation Program for the Community Physical Image Plan

This section describes the major actions involved in implementing the Community Physical Image and Character Element and indicates the relative priority of each, the responsible agency and any required coordination. Numerous specific actions are described in the body of the plan while the items listed below are only the major short- and mid-term actions.

Priority   **Activity**

1   **Greenway System:** Endorse the long-term plan, establish general guidelines for space needs and design elements, begin a process of alignment studies and official mapping, identify and commit the initial funding, and begin initial land acquisition.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Planning and Development Department and the Greene County Planning and Zoning Department.

Required Coordination: Greene County; Springfield-Greene County Parks Board

1   **Parkway System:** Endorse the long-term plan, establish general guidelines for space needs and design elements, continue the process of alignment studies and official mapping; identify and commit the initial funding, and begin initial land acquisition.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Area Transportation Study Organization.

Required Coordination: City of Springfield, Greene County; Springfield-Greene County Parks Board

1   **Commercial Corridors:** Improve public landscaping and lighting, bury or relocate overhead wires, improve private landscaping, add theme treatments.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Public Works

Required Coordination: Board of Public Utilities

1   **Parks:** Acquire land for Neighborhood and Community parks.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Department of Planning and Development.

Required Coordination: Springfield-Greene County Joint Parks Board.

2   **Residential Streets:** Prepare city-wide program detailing tree species, spacing and funding; require residential land developers to install boulevard trees consistent with the plan; adjust right-of-way standards; increase required sidewalk width; amend street design standards.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Planning and Development Department;
Greene County.

Required Coordination: Springfield Departments of Building Regulation and
Public Works; Springfield Board of Public Utilities.

1 **Residential Corridors:** Require landscaped buffering of housing along major
streets. Use landscaped open space to buffer housing after street widenings.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Department of Planning and Development.

2 **Commercial Site Planning:** Enforce current regulations on landscaping and
signage; review site plans for protection of nearby housing; promote attractive,
intensively developed Activity Centers; improve landscaping requirements in the
Springfield zoning ordinance.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Department of Building Regulation

Required Coordination: Springfield Planning and Development Department

2 **Site Plan Review:** Increase staff discretion in regard to recommending site plan or
subdivision plat enhancements.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Planning and Development Department.

3 **Pathfinder Sign System:** Design system and initiate installation.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Planning and Development Department

Required Coordination: Springfield Department of Public Works; Greene County;
Missouri Department of Transportation

3 **Highways Corridors:** Prepare landscaping designs for the Kansas and Chestnut
Expressways; secure funding; initiate retrofits.   Introduce special treatments for
bridges, fences and screen walls along all major highways as infrastructure is rebuilt.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Planning and Development Department.

Required Coordination: Springfield Engineering Department, Greene County
Public Works, Missouri Department of Transportation.

3 **Community Entrance Signs:** Design system and initiate installation.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Planning and Development Department

Required Coordination: Springfield Department of Public Works; Greene County;
Missouri Department of Transportation

2   **Neighborhood or District Identification:** Comprehensively name and map neighborhoods and districts. Design and install district identification signs in conjunction with other district revitalization efforts. Crete neighborhood or district entry and focal features.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Planning and Development Department

Required Coordination: Springfield Department of Public Works

3   **Sign Regulation:** Continue to administer recently adopted Springfield sign regulations. Improve Greene County sign regulations.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Department of Building Regulation; Greene County Zoning Administrator.

3   **Parks:** Improve park landscaping, edges, focal features, signage and lighting.

Responsible Agency: Springfield-Greene County Parks Board

3   **Historic Preservation:** Continue to preserve and interpret historic structures and districts.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Department of Planning and Development.

Required Coordination: Springfield Landmarks Board.

3   **Wilson's Creek National Battlefield:** Preserve open views from key vantage points in the National Battlefield.

Responsible Agency: Greene County

Required Coordination: National Park Service

3   **Urban vs. Rural Distinction:** Work to retain the visual distinction between the urban and the rural areas through application of the Land Use and Growth Management Element of Vision 20/20.

Responsible Agency: Springfield Department of Planning and Development, and Greene County Zoning Department.

Required Coordination: Springfield Metropolitan Planning Organization;, Christian County.